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Wesleyan University Club of New York

Tributes to Professor William North Rice

[New York?]

[1915]

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Tributes to Professor William North Rice, annual dinner, New York Wesleyan university club, January 29, 1915.
cover-title, 40 p.

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TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

FILM SIZE: 35mm REDUCTION RATIO: 12:1 IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA (IIA) IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 2-10-97 INITIALS: MS

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Tributes to
Professor William North Rice

Annual Dinner
New York Wesleyan University Club
January 29, 1915

PUBLISHED BY
THE WESLEYAN ALUMNI COUNCIL
W. A. JONES, '81, CHAIRMAN

17 Feb 1916
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The Occasion.

The annual dinner of the Wesleyan University Club of New York, the largest in its history with an attendance of over two hundred, which was held on January 29th, 1915, at Delmonico's, was a celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the graduation of Professor William North Rice of the Class of 1865.

Owing to the illness of the President, Hon. J. E. Eustis, '74, the presiding officer was the Vice-President, Dr. David G. Downey, '84. The dinner was frequently interrupted by informal singing and some unusually clever work by a quartette of alumni Jibers, and, especially, by the presentation to Professor Rice of a large birthday cake adorned with a dial of figures from one to one hundred, and a hand pointing to the fifty mark, by William D. Leonard, '78, who said:

"If it be true, as some one has said, that the real 'casus belli' is that the Kaiser found out that when England spoke of the Immortal William, she meant Shakespeare, then I shall provoke no breach of the Peace when I declare that when a Wesleyan man speaks of the Immortal William, he means Billy Rice. It is a grand thing for a man named William to be called Billy. What is lost in dignity is gained in grip. If his head diminishes, his heart expands.

"In the name of some of the Old Boys, and on behalf of your many loving friends (which means all who know you) I beg to tender to you this trifling and ephemeral token of our enduring affection.

"To us Ancients, the survivors of the Old Regime, the Faculty of Wesleyan means you, and your colleagues of our day. Our memories of you and them are sweet as this confection, as your teachings were more nourishing. I cannot say how palatable this is, nor do I care to suggest any comparison in that respect between it and some of our experiences. This will grow stale and perhaps unprofitable. Not so our love for you, which, like the banyan, strikes new roots with every passing year.

"You once said you had attained your position as Senior of the Faculty by dint of persistent survivorship. Did you mean you had survived the ordeal of the classroom by dint of persistency? If you did, may your persistency continue to dint until the hands of time, not fixed as on this dial, have moved another half century."

Professor Rice replied that although he had always tried to do his duty, he had never expected to take the cake and that he surely would continue his persistency for another half century, if he could.

Several of the addresses of the evening have appeared in the *Wesleyan Literary Monthly*. These are reprinted herein, together with the other addresses and a paper prepared by our former president, Dr. B. P. Raymond, who was unable to be present at the dinner. Mr. F. B. Upham, Jr., '15, spoke for the undergraduates. The other speakers were President Shanklin, Professor Isaiah Bowman of Yale, Stephen H. Olin, LL. D., '66, Professor Winchester, '69, and Professor Rice, '65.

An Appreciation.

By President Shanklin.

I AM gratified at this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the constant sympathetic loyalty and upholding of your guest of the evening—this rare personality, this eminent scientist, this great teacher, who loves the truth above all things, and is never afraid to follow whithersoever it may lead. Professor Rice is an ideal colleague, ever ready with friendly counsel, never flinching from a frank expression of his own views, yet never failing in loyalty to the official head of the college. I owe him an incalculable debt. To share his friendship has stirred afresh my best resolves for high living and noble thinking. With every Wesleyan man I thank God for this spirit that has let loose such intellectual and moral forces on yonder hill overlooking the Connecticut, and who has for nearly half a century spent himself in the moulding and mastery of young men. Each of this great company of Wesleyan men to-night greets you, sir, looks you frankly in the face, and says to you in tones and greeting, if not in words: I love you because you inspired in me a desire to be my best, and to make my life more and more like your own, one in which faith and work are bells of full accord.

To Wesleyan men the name of William North Rice has become almost a synonym for catholicity and charity. Some men's toleration of those who differ from them is mere good nature or indifference. Other men's tolera-

tion is the mere application of a theory, and is quite consistent with strong personal dislikes. In you, sir, we have found a catholicity which is the issue of a lofty conception of Jesus Christ and His Church, combined with an instinctive love for man; and heart and mind are prefectly united in it. You have ever had an open welcome for whoever brought anything of love for truth or interest in noble things.

"I love all who love truth, if poor or rich,
In what they have won of truth possessively,"

"As certain also of your own poets have said," you have seemed to be always repeating, as if in the highest and truest and most poetic utterance of each man's faith you have rejoiced to find the common essence of all. It is no task for stars to shine; and so with you, all that you do seems easy, as if but the natural and spontaneous utterance of what you are, the effortless radiance of a nature which was made to gather and to utter light.

Multitudes of men, many of whom are not Wesleyan alumni, are your debtors because of your "Twenty-five Years of Scientific Progress," wherein you teach the great truth that the transitory stands still, fades and falls to pieces: the eternal continues by advancing its form in accordance with the movement of advancing ages.

What a range of tributes concerning your benign and stimulating influence has come to me during the past half dozen years as I have met alumni from Maine to the Pacific coast. One alumnus, a brilliant scholar, a great teacher, and a devout Christian man, himself the potent moral force in a large university, has testified that it is you who made him a scholar and that his enthusiasm also for a positive Christian life was largely due to you. Another has said: "It was Professor Rice who retouched my ideals, taught me a new philosophy of the

life of service, and cast a spell of stimulating and abiding influence over my life."

We want you to know that Wesleyan men love you for your charm of simple truthfulness and frank manliness, of a true sympathy for all forms of healthy human action, independent of the position which you have held for so many years, and which has had its real being in your personality itself.

I was struck forcibly the other day by a word of the late John Muir: "Longest is the life that contains the largest amount of time-effacing enjoyment: of work that is steady delight." What a lesson Professor Rice has, through the years, daily taught in his grasping the little section of existence that the philosophers have such difficulty in defining, and living it to the best of his ability for "steady delight," "an image of high principle and feeling."

Yet I attempt no characterization of our distinguished guest of the evening. Personality defies classification and eludes analysis. You cannot find a perfume in a botany book. Cataloguing virtues is not producing a man.

Of the many enthusiasms, however, of Professor Rice, none surpasses that for the College of our heart's affection. How he has baptized it with his prayers and tears, how filled he has been with devices for its welfare, how jealous of its fair fame, how willing to spend and be spent in its behalf, even though the more abundantly he loved it the less he might be loved. I believe he could say to the innermost and to the uttermost: Sooner than forget thee, O Wesleyan, my hand shall forget her cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.

He has had the genius to be loved, the genius to be trusted, and the genius to be listened to—the blessed

triad that must keep company in any life to make it winsome, beautiful, commanding, and Christlike. These elements so interpenetrate each other, so play into each other, and are so harmoniously blended in him that he has won the loving admiration of every son of Wesleyan.

May God grant him yet long years to the College which has been his hope, his ambition, and his care for nearly half a century!

Professor Rice as a Scientist.

By Professor Bowman, of Yale.

PERHAPS some of you wonder why Professor Rice's reputation as a scientist should be entrusted to one of such tender years. Certainly that has been a source of mystery to me. Some of the other speakers have talked as if this were a funeral, and I suppose it is the toastmaster's idea that someone ought to tell Professor Rice what chance he has of at least intellectual resurrection in future generations of young men. A recollection of Horace must pass through his mind:

"When forests shed their foliage at the fall
The earliest born still drops the first of all;
So fades the elder race of words, and so
The younger generations bloom and grow."

Professor Rice will wish to know what he has written that will move the men of a later age to reverence truth as well as to seek knowledge. He must feel as Professor Davis felt when he said to the Yale Geological Club a few years ago that he would like to return to earth a hundred years hence just for an hour, and see how much of his interpretation of Connecticut Valley geology had stood the test of a century of criticism. If, therefore, I throw but feeble light upon Professor Rice's scientific work, I shall at least comfort him with the word that the young men of to-day hail him as a true prophet, and regard his work as of the nature of imperishable truth.

Whenever Professor Rice composes a scientific paper

he writes a sermon. His address on *Scientific Progress* (1893) closes with the introduction to the *Lord's Prayer.* When he writes of the *gastrula in Amphioxus* or of the skull of *Pithecanthropus erectus* it is not solely to teach a lesson in zoology or the anatomy of the skull. He must also discriminate, at times even through the medium of poetry, between the evolutionist's idea of God,

"Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man,"

and the traditional theology which sees God only in startling events, in great cataclysms, and in the purely mysterious forces of nature. It is therefore fitting that in speaking to-night of his scientific work I should *sermonize.* It is however, the first sermon I have ever delivered; in saying that it is probably the only one I shall ever deliver I shall at once anticipate your criticisms of so poor a sermon and at the same time fix in your minds the peculiarly lovable quality of the guest whom we have met to honor. I cannot think that I should ever be persuaded to sermonize about any other of my scientific friends—though if they were to profit by such a course of action my conscience might not permit me to refrain, for verily most of them need it, Amen!

The best fruit of civilization is the development of the human spirit, however hard it may be for the heathen to believe that in these perilous times. Our universities and schools, our great and numerous libraries, our art galleries and museums—what are they apart from their effect upon the human soul? Of what use are the books and articles written to-day in such vast numbers, if they do not react upon the spirit of their readers and elevate the standards of human service. They need not be moral treatises to fulfil this function. An eager, inquiring

mind searching for the *truths* of nature may find in the technical description of a *Mylodon* an incentive to a broader study of animal forms and thus to the philosophic conception of the unity of nature and the essentially religious conception of the oneness of nature. The healthy and inspiring reflections of a Maeterlinck may be fully shared only by the man who has patiently studied, through observation and experiment, the natural principles on which his otherwise mysterious philosophy rests.

If we apply these standards of the human spirit to the work of Professor Rice we shall find it difficult to avoid the conclusion that he is one of the most influential scientists of his time. To paraphrase one of his own sentences, Professor Rice has achieved an enviable position of influence and respect by enthroning within his soul a supreme purpose—the consecration of his life to truth and goodness. This is known to all of us through the radiance of his character; it is perhaps not so generally known to those of you who have not read most of his scientific papers. On every page there shines the light of a rare spirit—of one who sees truth face to face and is not afraid to reveal it. He demonstrates in his best work that moral cowardice and the ability to achieve really great things in natural science never dwelt together in the same soul. It required a high degree of both courage and originality to stand almost alone as he once stood for the sanctity of scientific truth in the revision of creed.

There are several qualities of Professor Rice's mind and heart of which we must speak more fully if we would see his work in its true light.

The first in his wonderful mastery of detail. The other day at the Peabody Museum of Yale University I was told of a typical occurrence. A bulletin of the Connecticut Survey was in proof. It had been corrected and

approved by the author. Professor Rice looked it over and made some changes, not in such trivial matters as punctuation and paragraphing, but in the use of anatomical names employed perhaps not once in twenty years and in the correction of technical statements that had been approved by one of the highest specialists in that branch of science. Such mastery of detail shows not only prodigious toil but religious toil—the elevation of exact truth to the rank of a fine moral principle.

I had a similar experience with him only a few years ago—one that affected me profoundly, but one that I dare say he has wholly forgotten. I was working on the Physiography of the Rocky Mountains. I had read almost all the literature on that subject and believed myself familiar with the details of mountain form. In reply to Professor Rice's enquiry, I told him of some of my generalizations. I had supposed him quite unfamiliar with the details and therefore uncritical of my results. In his mild and fatherly way he criticized one of my pet conclusions and defended his criticisms with such a wealth of detail that I was completely surprised. I had thought that I was telling him some new things about the Rockies —I ended by being his disciple. Further investigation fully showed the ground of his criticism and the necessity of carrying a spirit of humility into any discussion with such a master of detail.

It reminded me of my experience with Professor T. C. Chamberlin, the leader in American geology. He asked me what types of structure I had found in the Cretaceous limestones of the Central Andes. When I related a half dozen and was pretty well satisfied with the length and dignity of my list, he replied that it was all very interesting but he had more particularly wished to know about the other eleven types—that the conclusions concerning

the history of Cretaceous time required at least seventeen categories of structure of which I had described only the first six!

But it is the peculiar quality of Professor Rice's mind that it never stops at details. To him a fact must take its place in a broad philosophy of life or throw light on a principle of nature or a moral truth. Erosion, metamorphism, or igneous injection—the important thing about each is its place in the evolution of the Earth and of the life of the Earth—not its relation to some physical law, knowledge of which merely gratifies a shallow curiosity as to the workings of nature. The unusual combination of these qualities of deep sincerity, a trained and obedient mind, and a religious attitude toward his life work led to a striking result—a group of essays and finally a book of profound importance: *Christian Faith in an Age of Science.* Here thousands of souls have renewed their faith. The situation which stimulated Professor Rice to make this his chief work is well summarized in his "Twenty Years of Scientific Progress," as follows:

"The younger generation of scientific students can hardly appreciate to-day the agonies of terror with which the doctrine of Evolution was regarded by many religious men twenty-five years ago, and the intense bitterness with which the theory and its advocates were denounced. An irenic era has followed the period of conflict. Now and then, indeed, some theological Rip van Winkle attempts the old Sinaitic thunders in denunciation of the essential atheism of evolution; but his utterances are regarded by his brethren in the church, not with sympathy, but with amusement or mortification. The curriculum of an orthodox theological seminary is hardly regarded as complete to-day without a course of

lectures on the consistency of Evolution with theistic philosophy.....the scientific world of to-day is practically unanimous in the belief that life must have originated by some sort of natural process; and the announcement no longer shocks the religious feelings of any intelligent person."

The critic in this field of investigation must have no less of reverence for faith than of faithfulness in his search for facts. Professor Rice would probably find in Noyes' verses an expression of his own attitude as a scientist toward the faith of his fathers:

"We have not turned in doubt aside,
Nor mocked with our ephemeral breath
The little creeds that man's poor pride
Still fashions in these gulfs of death,
The little creeds that only prove
Thou art so far, so far above.

"So far beyond all space and time;
So infinitely far that none
Though by ten thousand heavens he climb
Higher, shall yet be higher by one;
So far that—whelmed with light—we dare,
Father, to know that Thou art there."

It is a satisfaction to meet the sincere inquiries of the present generation of students to which Professor Rice stands as a grandfather by reference to a solid book where the reader is led, not through the mazes of a heathen mysticism but straight along the road from solid fact to equally substantial, moral and religious conclusions. The nascent mind of youth as well as the penetrating mind of the scholar finds here an adequate answer to fundamental questions of faith in relation to scientific truth.

It was time that a leader arose for whose scientific work we had the deepest respect. An apologist was not needed; but we did need a reliable thinker. Into the religious life of tens of thousands the doctrine of evolution came like the devil in disguise. It was heresy to believe it; yet it seemed like violating facts to disbelieve it. Belief in the principles of geology had in a still earlier generation meant nothing less than the abrogation of the Bible. There could be no middle ground. The violence done by extremists to plain truths is one of the most painful facts in the history of science.

I remember a number of years ago, while engaged in Survey work, finding myself in a small town in western Michigan. Near my hotel was a pleasant brick church over-run with ivy and as evening drew near the people came from all directions and entered its open and hospitable door. A bright, energetic minister spoke to this group and that. I thought he might have a message for me. It occurred to me that while I was delving into the science of the earth he had studied the ways of the soul. I would see what he had to tell. To my deep interest he began to attack the theory of evolution. I was prepared to see his trained mind carry by assault some of the outer works of that great fortress. Instead he became hortatory. His voice rose to a shout. He denounced Darwin and others of his kind as blasphemous atheists. It was impious to believe a word in favor of this ridiculous theory that denied God. He closed by saying that all of the best scientific men of the day had abandoned this pernicious theory and from obscure sources quoted at length doubtful passages to prove his point. It was only with the greatest difficulty that I could refrain from rising in my place and denouncing him to his misguided congregation.

Facts were distorted, theories misstated, and the whole exposition made essentially irreligious. His motto seemed to be "Lie for God." Now it is a religious principle of the scientific man that he works for truth. He will not blink truth. He will admit his fallibility—that now and then he sees "as through a glass darkly"—that progress in science has been to a large extent progress in revision. But for all that, he does have a body of unassailable fact and conclusion and that he will not renounce. In Professor Rice's morality it would be dishonest to say that the whale and Jonah ever took a cruise together on the Mediterranean, or that man originated six thousand years ago just because there are legends to that effect in an otherwise excellent book.

I quote from one of his well-known papers:

"As scientific men, we know too well the fallibility of all processes, and the uncertainity of all results of human thought, to suppose ourselves to be the custodians of absolute truth on any subject. Our creed-revisions come not once in three hundred years, but every day. We have no belief to-day on any subject which we are not ready to abandon to-morrow. But the history of past conflicts suggests that Christianity survives because it meets the moral needs of mankind—because, whatever errors or superstitions may have been linked with it, and supposed by its foes or its friends to be integral parts of it, it contains essential truth."

Comrade of an earlier generation, to you who have traveled so far in front of us on the straight road of thought as well as the long road of life, I close with these homely lines which express one aspect of our thought of you to-night:

"On your brave summit you have waged the fight;
Unwearied you have battled for the Right."

Professor Rice as an Undergraduate.

By The Honorable Stephen H. Olin, LL. D., '66.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen:—

It is nearly fifty-three years since, as a Freshman, I returned to my native Middletown. I was welcomed by the venerable Dr. Johnston, once a friend and colleague of my father. At his hospitable table I met Willie Rice, who was, if I mistake not, the youngest Sophomore, as I was the youngest Freshman. Before many days I became aware that Rice was a considerable person in the college community. It was war time and there were fewer students in Middletown than there are Freshmen there to-day. The Sophomore Class was much the largest of the classes, but it was chiefly noted because it contained three men who, tested by a minute marking system, outranked in scholarship all their predecessors. Not only were they accustomed to receive the marks awarded for perfect performance, but they encroached upon that reserve of marks witheld lest it should appear that the professors' idea of perfection was no higher than other people's. The giving out of their record for each term was a sporting event—where sporting events were few. Rice was always leading Westgate by a nose. Mudge came a neck behind. Who could say which of them would come first under the wire?

We knew Rice to be more learned and more studious, but I cannot remember that we thought him better than all others. For one thing, he never said he was. And, there, the marking system made default. In regard to

character it was neither precise nor comprehensive. I specialized in conduct and, I venture to say, not without recognition. Indeed, President Cummings, when I graduated, was good enough to assure me that no other good student in his time had earned so many conduct marks. But, in awarding these, the faculty took note chiefly, I sometimes thought excessively, of the outcome of high spirits and youthful energy. Now-a-days these things are rated in athletic sports, where they are better employed and more adequately appraised. Furthermore, Rice had an extravagant way of expending a virtue when a vice would serve. He could be angry and sin not. He had a fashion of using simple words—the adjective grie-e-evous was one of them—with an emphasis which gave them all the important advantages of profanity. For one or another of these reasons, I had been some years out of college and had met men upon a wider stage before I became fully aware that in three years of intimate friendship, I had found in Rice nothing base or selfish or cowardly and that no word or act of his had been wrong as tested by any moral code which I was competent to apply. Put down the names of men concerning whom you can say as much and see how long your list will be.

In the college activities, which were not rewarded by marks, Rice had the same habit of doing his best, just as his handwriting showed as many colons and semi-colons to the running foot in casual notes as in prize essays.

Just when his theological beliefs grew less rigid I cannot remember, but the change, when it came, did not affect his behavior, and his increasing tolerance never extended to shortcomings of his own.

This club, Mr. President, has never before, so far as I can remember, devoted an evening to expressing our

esteem and regard for any one. I like to think that if, in the Sixty's, the college body had selected the man whom we chiefly delighted to honor, we should have chosen the one that you choose to-day. We were a simple folk. The modern catalogue with its alluring list of educational dainties and mental stimulants would have puzzled the professors as Mr. Delmonico's *menu* and wine list would have puzzled the Stewards of the Alpha and Chique Chauque Clubs, or as Dr. Fauver's pervasive program of internecine strife would have puzzled the magnates of Agallian baseball. Being few and simple and all of us busy in learning the same things in the same way from the same teachers, we had at least the advantage that we were competent and sympathetic judges of each other.

In those days the college wishing to confer an honor upon any one, said so in Latin and let it go at that. The modern fashion was unknown, of appending to the degree an explanation or apology in the vernacular. But if we had been asked why Willie Rice was distinguished among us, we would all have said: Because in an institution of learning he was the first scholar;—because in a school of character his reputation was without stain;—and because where men from varying motives were choosing their life work, he was guided by no less a purpose than the broadening of Science, and the establishing of Faith.

Professor Rice as a Member of the Faculty.

By Professor Winchester, '69.

I admire, but I do not at all wonder at, the facility and the felicity of Mr. Olin's remarks upon his old friend Rice. Because, you see, he has had so long time to prepare them. I heard that same speech fifty years ago this summer. Of course Mr. Olin's life time practice in all the graces of expression has enabled him to add to its fluency and charm; but it is essentially the same speech. You know it is a long established custom at Middletown that selected members of the upper classes shall furnish gratuitously to the ignorant incoming Freshmen needed information about the various opportunities of college life, and especially about the character and attainments of the brilliant men who are in college or just going out; thus awakening in the callow Freshman a wholesome ambition and a healthy temper of emulation. It was with this view that Mr. Olin, one June afternoon fifty years ago, recounted to me the wonderful record of the class of 1865—the great class that was just going out of Wesleyan to make room for the class of 1869 to get in. It was a wonderful class, he said. There were very remarkable men in that class—Atwater, and Mudge, and Westgate, and Kelley, and others I do not now recall. But there was *one* member of that class beside whose brilliancy as thinker, writer, speaker, all other lights must pale,

William North Rice. Everybody recognized it, Mr. Olin said. The college recognized it; and had already made sure that his abilities should be secured for Wesleyan; he would study further, and then return to the faculty. Well, I assented courteously, as a Freshman should; but with the characteristic fear of the Freshman lest his credulity should be imposed upon, I mentally made some reservations, and concluded that some allowances must be made for Mr. Olin's partial friendship. A few days later, I saw this Mr. Rice, and wondered whether it could be true "That one small head could carry all he knew"—or was said to.

But two years and a half later Mr. Rice came back to Middletown, this time as Professor of Geology and Natural History. I sat in his class room as an undergraduate. I noticed the thoroughness of his knowledge, the combined fluency and accuracy of his speech, his insistence upon correctness and precision in the work of his pupils. I began to think that Mr. Olin was probably not far wrong. In another year I was myself graduated and entered the faculty of Wesleyan in a very humble capacity. I soon came to know William North Rice; and, Mr. President, I found that the tribute of Mr. Olin was simple truth. I've known it ever since. Nothing gave me more pride in those early days than to be associated, in however humble capacity, with the faculty of which he was a member.

I am to speak of Professor Rice this evening as a member of the faculty rather than as a personal friend; yet I cannot refrain from a grateful mention of those delightful early days when it was my privilege to see Professor Rice rather more frequently, and in some ways more intimately than the duties of our later years have allowed. For some months we sat at the same table together; we

had many talks on many subjects. We were young men together; for although in knowledge and wisdom he was then a long stage in advance of me—as, indeed, he has been ever since—yet in years, I regret to say that I am not very much his junior. I was then opening my mind to those larger questions of life and duty which every young man must settle for himself, but finds invaluable help for their solution in wise and sympathetic intellectual companionship. I saw in this young professor a man who was not afraid of any truth; heartily devoted to scientific study and research; seeing clearly the hard questions which physical science seemed in the fifties and sixties to be putting to our accepted beliefs; but who yet maintained a broad human outlook and a devout religious faith. As I look back for forty-five years, I account the friendship of William North Rice one of the helpful influences of my life, one of the unchanging treasures of memory.

But I am to speak of Professor Rice as a member of the faculty of Wesleyan University. The coming of Professor Rice to Wesleyan really marks the opening of a new chapter in the history of the college. Not that Wesleyan had not already an able faculty. Any boy who for four years sat in the class rooms of such instructors as Calvin Harrington, and Fales Newhall, and John M. Van Vleck, and searched the abysmal depth of consciousness—often in vain—to answer the questions of that Socrates of the class room, Joseph Cummings—that boy got an education. But in one quarter the instruction given in Wesleyan in the later sixties was deficient. The historian of European thought will probably pronounce the characteristic of the third quarter of the nineteenth century to be the rapid growth and influence of physical science. It was the age, in England, of Darwin, and Huxley, and

Tyndall, and Spencer. And in Wesleyan University there was no physical science taught. I do not forget the venerable John Johnson; but in 1866 and '67 his long and honorable career was practically ended. But with the coming of Professor Rice the curriculum of Wesleyan was fairly opened to the physical sciences. I have only to mention the names of some of the men who have been his colleagues, Atwater, Bradley, Crawford, Rosa, Benedict, Conn, Cady, to show how large a place those sciences have occupied in the college ever since, and how eminent have been the men who have represented them.

But the early years of Professor Rice in the faculty were marked by other, and perhaps even more important changes. When he entered the faculty the course of study for the Bachelor's degree had been essentially unchanged for twenty-five years. Greek, Latin, Mathematics, some Philosophy, a little Economics and less History—that was the bill of fare; the same for every student. In my Senior year the only elective offered was a choice between Hebrew and the Differential Calculus—I dare say you may have heard me mention this before, for the malevolent ingenuity of that choice forced upon us made a lasting impression on my memory. I took Hebrew; partly because I thought myself more likely to understand it, and partly because it gave me an opportunity to sit in the class room of Fales Newhall, and in the intervals of discussion of the difference between *chamets* and *chamets hatuph*, to catch now and then some of his eloquent and illuminating comment on the English of the Old Testament.

But by 1873, four years later, the curriculum had been entirely revised. The elective system had been introduced more fully than anywhere else in New England save at Harvard, giving opportunity not only for advanced study

in the older subjects, but for a choice between a considerable number of new courses in physical science, modern languages, English History, and Economics. Of course such a change necessitated a considerable increase in the number of the faculty. In the earlier days the theory seemed to be that if any subjects outside the honored circle of the classics and mathematics were to be taught, they must be entrusted to the President—who could teach anything, a kind of *Professor der Allerleiwissenschaft.* like Teufelsdroeckh in the Sartor. I myself have sat in President Cummings' class room while he taught Psychology, Ethics, Evidences of Christianity, Butler's Analogy, Political Economy, Constitution of the United States, International Law, and Whateley's Rhetoric. But the rearranging of the course made necessary a little more specialization in the teaching force. In 1868 there were nine men in the faculty; in 1874 there were fifteen.

Now Professor Rice would be the first to deny that these great changes were due entirely to his influence. Yet any one who remembers the discussions in the faculty during those years, although as a listener rather than as a participant, knows how very largely the whole movement to broaden and modernize the instruction in Wesleyan was due to the breadth of attainment, the vigorous initiative, and the gift for organization of the young Professor William North Rice. And in all modifications, enlargements or restrictions of the curriculum since that early day, in all questions of general college policy, his sense of proportion, his just estimate of the relative value of different lines of study and different forms of mental discipline, have been of the utmost value. Of course we haven't all of us always agreed with him—I have never seen any sluggish unanimity of opinion in the Wesleyan faculty. But if you differ with Professor Rice you may

be assured of two things: first, that he will give you a fair hearing; and second, that you will need all your resources of argument to turn his position. For he doesn't have the habit of jumping to his conclusions; he knows every step of the logical road to them. And I am bound to say that in almost every instance to differ with Professor Rice on any matter of college policy, was to find oneself on the losing side. And I suspect that, in the very few cases where that has not proved true, he consoles himself with the reflection that it is better to lose with logic than to win with prejudice!

I should say further that no man in the faculty knows so much of the detail of internal administration in the college during the last forty years, as Professor Rice. He is a thoughtful and accurate writer, but it is quite possible that no other one of his published works has had so wide a circulation or exerted greater influence than one I cannot myself claim to be acquainted with—I mean that terse, carefully phrased little treatise which is furnished gratuitously to every Freshman on entering college, and which contains the rules and regulations by which his steps must be ordered for the next four years—the Freshman Bible. I don't know that every line of it was written by Professor Rice, but I am pretty sure that it was inspired chiefly by him; as they say of the other Bible, other men wrote as they were moved by him.

It is to him also, that we have been accustomed to look for the interpretation and application of these rules. He has been on what we call our Administration Committee since the memory of man runneth not to the contrary—at all events my memory doesn't—and carries in mind all decisions, precedents and considerations of aggravating and extenuating circumstance. He is our unwritten constitution. And I am sure that the general verdict upon

all his administrative acts was pretty well expressed in a remark I once overhead from a student who had, I take it, just come from some little ineffectual discussion with Professor Rice over a matter of personal conduct; "Confound it" (his expression was rather more forcible) "you've got to own that Billy is a square man."

All of us admit that. We all recognize, further, that Professor Billy has a power of self-control and moderation of temper quite remarkable when joined with such positiveness of opinion. He has, indeed, a rather copious gift of superlative statement; but he always uses that to emphasize the positive and universal character of his conclusions. He doesn't allow himself any real disturbance of his judicial temper. His extremest swear-word is "Oh Grievous!" and I have seen him content himself with that mild expletive in vexatious or irritating circumstances where I fear I should have ventured a quiet "damn!"

But the first duty of a teacher is to teach. How well Professor Rice has performed that duty, everybody who has ever sat in his class room knows. Of his scientific attainments, others more competent than I can speak; but his pupils all can testify to his power to impart knowledge. In fifty years nobody has ever been heard to hint that Professor Rice was not a good teacher. Of his gift of explanation and exposition I have in all these years heard only one criticism—and that outside the class-room. I have, I think, heard it suggested that Professor Rice is so careful that his statements should be finished quite to the outer edge, with no ragged fringes of thought, that he will never leave anything to the intelligent inference of his listener. But so precise a thinker as Professor Rice knows very well that what the average listener calls his intelligent inference, is likely to be both hasty and

prejudiced. If you want to make your hearer really understand anything, you mustn't let go of him until you have packed your thought into his mind entire and complete, with no loose ends hanging out for misapprehension to get hold of. And that's what Professor Rice does.

But what his colleagues have most admired in Professor Rice is the range of his attainments, the breadth of his intellectual outlook. When first he came to Wesleyan we used to say that he might have filled pretty well any chair—Greek, Latin, Mathematics, Ethics, English; if it had been his lot to be an old-fashioned college president, he could have taught them all. Indeed, I don't know but he *has* taken a turn at most of them at one time or another in the last forty years. Nobody ever questioned his his eminence in his own department; but we have each and all found, sometimes a little to our surprise, that he is not a stranger in ours. He has never forgotten his Greek; you will not find him ignorant of the outstanding facts of history; in his writing and his speech there is always a flavor of the best literature, and I learned incidentally the other day—Professor Rice will excuse me for giving it away—that he is under engagement soon to give a lecture on the poetry of Alfred Tennyson. And you may be sure it will be an able lecture. For Professor Rice hasn't learned how to be superficial. He doesn't dabble. There are, to be sure, limits to Rice's abilities and attainments—I should hardly venture, for example, to commend his singing voice. But whether in his vocation or in his avocations, whatever he knows he knows thoroughly. Did you ever see his handwriting? Well, if Professor Rice were in a restaurant, five minutes before his train were to start and had to write a waiter's order for one boiled egg and a cup of tea, he would do it in a copper-plate hand in which a microscope couldn't detect a single malformed letter.

But while Professor Rice has never accounted any humane studies foreign to a scholar, he has always been most interested in the large questions of the relations of physical science to Philosophy and religion. And in these practical days, when scientific studies are valued largely for their material results, when metaphysics hardly get a hearing, and the scientists seem to think that even in philosophy and religion they must have the last word, it is inspiring to find a scholar who loves truth for its own sake and not for its value in the market, and who sees and feels that our search for truth can never stop with the phenomena, but must look beyond them for their Source and Law. In the early days I think some good folk were anxious about Professor Rice's theology. In the sixties and seventies we used to hear a good deal about the decay of theology and the advance of scientific thought. I suppose the trouble was that the scientists hadn't enough theology, and the theologians hadn't enough science. And if a young man came along who wanted to know something about both, he was thought to be in a parlous state. Well, I needn't tell you that Professor Rice for the last fifty years has been himself a refutation of any alleged conflict between science and religion; and I venture to think that none of his teaching in all that time has been of more service to thinking young men than the course he has given for the last ten or a dozen years, based on that admirable book of his, "Christian Thought in an Age of Science." It has at least taught hundreds of young men that if two truths seem to be in conflict we are not hastily to throw away either one, or arbitrarily pare down both to fit them together into our little scheme; but rather to recognize both, and, if need be, to wait reverently for larger knowledge in which they may be reconciled.

I should add that Professor Rice has never been a closet philosopher. He has always had a quick eye for concrete fact and practical result. Always actively interested in all measures of social, political or educational reform, if any movement for civic righteousness is on foot you will be sure to find him among its leaders.

I dwell on this breadth of Professor Rice's attainments and activity because it is just this, in my judgment, that has made him so admirable a college professor. I shall not be thought to underestimate the necessity of profound special scholarship and research; but in these days of specialization in everything, I think nothing is more valuable to the professor—certainly to the college professor as distinguished from the university—than this breadth of outlook, this recognition of relations and proportions in the wide field of human knowledge. The woods are full of little Ph. D.s who rather boast themselves on not knowing anything outside what they call their field, and who show for the credentials of their scholarship a doctoral dissertation that nobody will ever read or need to. But that isn't the type of scholarship most valuable in a college faculty. The best definition of a scholar that I know is Emerson's—"a man thinking." For nearly half a century Wesleyan University has had such a scholar in her faculty, William North Rice—may it be many years yet before she loses him!

The Religious Nature of Professor Rice

Prepared for this Pamphlet by our former President, Dr. B. P. Raymond.

WHEN Professor Rice graduated at Wesleyan University in 1865 he had already given promise of unusual scholarship and especially so in the field of science. No one, who is familiar with his work as a teacher, or with his reputation among scientific men, can doubt that he has justified the expectation then entertained concerning him. That reputation has steadily grown with the passing years. It lives in the memory and gratitude of his students, and is a source of just pride to all the alumni of Wesleyan University. The reception given him at the dinner of the New York Alumni Association was a fitting recognition of the scientist, of the man, and of the honor he has brought to the name of Wesleyan University.

But there is another characteristic of Professor Rice, concerning which little has been said, and that as it appears to me furnishes the key to his whole life. I refer to his deeply religious nature. In his response to the several congratulatory addresses spoken at the New York dinner he said: "The glory of life has always seemed to be, that any man who would conscientiously seek to know his duty would find a call to some divine task." This faith grasps the philosophy of religion at its root. It played the chief part in his call to Wesleyan, and in its spirit he has wrought at his vocation during all these years.

Where, if not in one's vocation, in fidelity and devotion to its tasks, should one become a confessor of his faith? If one would care to give a setting to the above faith-philosophy, he might recall the circumstances of Professor Rice's early life. He was born with an aptitude for science. The atmosphere of his home was alive with inquiry into the stirring questions of the time and among these were the questions relating to science and religion. One evening in 1857 two papers were read at the Linnean Society, one was by Alfred Russell Wallace, and the other by Charles Darwin. They projected the great controversy of the last fifty years into the world of scientific and religious thought. Of these papers Professor Rice writes: "These two papers are the Wittenberg Theses of the intellectual reformation of our time." Charles Darwin's book, "The Orgin of Species" was published in 1858. In these papers and in this book, published when Professor Rice was about thirteen years of age, the questions were formulated, that were to occupy his mind during the larger part of his life. In his home training, his aptitude and taste, his education, and his Christian inheritance, we discover the divinity that shaped the purposes of his life, and he could hardly have chosen any other vocation than that of Professor of Science at Wesleyan University.

His conscientious inquiry for the path of duty disclosed to him what has certainly proven to be "a divine task." The title of his book: "Christian Faith in an Age of Science," reveals his faith, his philosophy, and the vocation at which he has wrought with conspicious success for fifty years. He has always been a scientist, always a Christian, always at work at the problems of science in their relation to Christianity, and always a preacher of righteousness. When the great controversy

was on, and bitter feeling was aroused, he no doubt seemed to many to be an enemy of the faith. But it would have been a kind of sacrilege to him to have failed to follow the facts as he saw them. They were witnesses to a relation of God's law. Probably some who have looked for religious emotion, may have been disappointed. I doubt if he was ever heard to say in public: "Glory to God." But many have felt, "Glory to God," who have listened to his voice in the morning chapel service, and no one who has been accustomed to hear his testimony at the weekly prayer meeting could miss the pathos of genuine and deep spiritual emotion. Nevertheless it is true, that the intellectual quality of his faith, and the volitional steadiness of its expression, are more conspicuous than its emotional manifestation. Professor Rice's capacity for work, the steadiness of his faith, and his devotion to practical Christian tasks are inspiringly illustrated in his readiness for self-sacrificing service.

One might reasonably expect, that a diligent student of science, a devoted teacher—at times teaching over a wide range of subjects,—and called upon for a great deal of administrative work, might excuse himself from calls and claims for outside work. But if a pulpit is to be filled, or a Bible class taught, or a Y. M. C. A. address delivered, or a school visited, or an address given in the interest of Wesleyan at an annual conference, or a cause represented before a committee of the legislature, or the federation of churches advocated, or candidates examined for the the ministry, to whom has the President of the college gone, or upon whom have the pastors of the community called with such assurance as upon Professor Rice. Long before the experts began to dream of business efficiency, Professor Rice was practicing it. He was not on the firing line in '61-'65, but what a fight he has fought in

the new adjustment of the forces that now wage a spiritual warfare for the kingdom of God. I shall always be grateful for his friendship and for his loyalty during the years of my Presidency, and his religious devotion to duty will always be an inspiration.

Professor Rice's Response.

I SUPPOSE every one of us has sometime, when attending a funeral, thought how happy the subject of the service would be if he could see the beauty and smell the fragrance of the flowers, could recognize the numerous friends whose presence was the expression of their respect and affection, and could listen to the eulogistic sketches of his life and character, more or less imaginative, but in greater or less degree founded on fact. That pleasure seems to be mine this evening. I have the opportunity, while still in good health, to be present at my own funeral and listen to a series of eloquent eulogies. The word portraits which have been presented this evening certainly leave nothing to be desired from a purely artistic point of view. I am grateful that I have at least furnished some suggestions for pictures so beautiful.

I want to warn you not to draw an inference which might seem to be suggested by Professor Winchester's reference to an interesting period in the history of Wesleyan University. It is true that within a few years after my coming into the Faculty there came a change in the curriculum, the administration, and the spirit of the college, greater probably than has occurred at any one time in its history. The changes which were accomplished in 1873 were hardly less than a revolution. That date deserves, I think, to be regarded as an epoch in the history of the college, almost a second birth. I should be false to the memory of one whom I loved and

honored, if I allowed any one to suppose that in that change I was the leading spirit. Of course no one man made that change in the life and spirit of Wesleyan. The whole college life of our country was undergoing a transition. We felt the influence that was in the atmosphere. We followed the bidding of the spirit of the time. And yet it is true that there was one man in Wesleyan who was the leader in accomplishing the great change from the old to the new ideas and ideals of the college. That was a modest man who never sounded his own praises, and whose influence in the life of Wesleyan University is, in my opinion, duly appreciated by only a few in our constituency. I believe that his influence in the life of Wesleyan was greater than that of any other man except its first President, whose position was, of course, absolutely uinque. You all know that I refer to John Monroe Van Vleck. It is to me a joy and pride that in the changes that ushered in the new Wesleyan I can claim to have been his lieutenant.

An old man is expected to be reminiscent, and reminiscent I shall be this evening. But I feel disposed to bring to your memory not so much my own life as the history of Wesleyan University. Let me sketch an outline of the institution as it was in the year of my graduation. The old North College had not yet, phenix-like, undergone transformation by fire; and that and South College were the principal buildings of the institution. The basement of South College was our chapel. The next two floors held most of our recitation rooms. The fourth story housed what there was of library and museum. The old Boarding Hall stood in its ugliness, which was not yet mitigated by the erection of the substantial tower which holds the telescope and which has given to the building its present name. The small excrescence of a

tower which then marked the front of the building, looked as if it had been added to the building as an afterthought, to hold the stairways which the architect had forgotten to put inside. A little shanty crowned by a canvas dome contained a little equatorial telescope. Behind North College was a little brick building which had been the gun house of the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy and which in my time served as a chemical laboratory. Since then it has been Commons boarding hall, carpenter shop, and electrical laboratory. The material of its walls now serves as part of the brick work in the new North College. Behind the Chemical Laboratory was the long line of coal sheds to which in the winter we made our daily pilgrimages to bring fuel for the fires in our rooms. The architectural treasures of the institution had recently been increased by the addition of what to us was the new "Gym," which still survives as the carpenter shop. The endowment of the college was one hundred and eighty-two thousand dollars.

In the year of my graduation the Catalogue contained the names of 112 students. Three of them were not actually present, and by our present rules for the making of the Catalogue their names would have been omitted. The Faculty could have said in the language of the poet, "We are seven;" though one of the seven was a non-resident teacher of elocution. The work of instruction was not very minutely divided among the six resident teachers, and some of the combinations were rather peculiar. The Professor of Mathematics was librarian. One Professor was entitled Professor of Natural Science, and taught all that was taught in regard to the material universe excepting that the Professor of Mathematics taught Astronomy and part of the Physics. The Professor of English taught Hebrew. The Professor of Latin taught

History. The Professor of Greek taught French and German. The President taught Psychology, Ethics, Evidences of Christianity, Economics, Constitutional Law, and International Law. Until the previous year, in which a Professor of English was added to the Faculty, the President had also taught Logic and Rhetoric.

The curriculum was of the old standard type of the American colleges, and the studies were practically all required. A choice was allowed in the Junior year between Hebrew five times a week, and French and Mechanics (the latter subject treated from a purely mathematical standpoint) each two and one-half times a week. Under that arrangement, the body of students who were inspired with the pious desire to read the Old Testament in its original form, or whose devotion to philology gave them an ambition to extend their linguistic studies into the domain of the Semitic languages, appeared, to those of us who took the other alternative, a somewhat curious menagerie. In the last term of the Senior year there was also a choice between Butler's Analogy of Religion and a mathematical study of Optics. Only to this very limited extent had the elective system intruded into our curriculum.

There was no laboratory work done by the students, though in Chemistry and Physics lecture-table experiments were shown. There was little opportunity for what we should now consider advanced courses in any department. Human Physiology was the only part of biological science recognized in the curriculum. There was no opportunity to learn anything about the animals and plants of to-day, though students of Geology might learn something about trilobites and lepidodendrids. Three and one-half hours, according to our present reckoning, was the total allowance in Chemistry. One and

two-thirds hours were allowed for Geology, and half of that was Mineralogy. There was no opportunity to advance in Mathematics beyond an elementary course in Calculus, and all the pure Mathematics in the course was required. Two and one-half hours was all that could be taken in either French or German. The allowance for the ancient languages was, of course, relatively larger than for any other subjects. Each of the classic tongues was allotted twelve and one-half hours, but it could scarcely be said that there were any advanced courses in these departments, for we translated and parsed in our Senior year about in the same fashion as in our Freshman year. There was a Scientific Course leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science, but it was only the Classical Course with the Classics left out.

The library included fourteen thousand volumes. It was open five hours a week, and that was more than enough, for the students rarely entered it.

The discipline of the college was said to be paternal; certainly the relations between Faculty and students were not then, as they tend to be now, fraternal. No honor system existed, and there was nothing like the conference committee of Faculty and students which has been so potently influential in the college life of recent years. Excuses were required for every absence, and unexcused absences from classes were punished by deductions from the standing. The standing was based, almost entirely, on daily recitations. Term and annual examinations had relatively very little weight. There were few prizes offered. There was nothing like the present system of non-competitive honors in general scholarship and in special departments. The one supreme prize which appealed to the student's ambition was the valedictory at Commencement, awarded to the student who had the

highest aggregate standing in the four years. Of course, that system secured a punctuality of attendance and a thoroughness of preparation of each day's lessons which we do not have to-day. I would be glad to hear again such recitations as I heard from Professor Winchester and from some other members of his class, which was the first class on which I tried my 'prentice hand as a teacher. But I am sure that our present system of throwing students in some degree upon their own responsibility produces on the whole a better, because a more independent, type of scholarship. The best students in the old time learned their lessons too well—committed to memory the details of the prescribed number of pages in the text-book more accurately than was worth while. The type of scholarship which can show, in a final examination, a comprehensive knowledge of the whole subject, is far more valuable than the type of scholarship which learns and forgets one lesson at a time.

There was far less in those days of the things included under the general category of student activities. Thoughtful educators of to-day generally share in President Wilson's lament that at present the side-shows unduly monopolize the attention of students and the entertainments in the main tent are neglected. Fifty years ago the side-shows were few. There were no undergraduate publications except the *Olla Podrida*, and that was a thin, modest pamphlet. There was no Young Men's Christian Association, though there was a moribund missionary society. Two large debating societies which had once been active, had a name to live, and showed occasional spasmodic movements. There were five fraternities in existence at the beginning of my Senior year, and four at the end. There were no club-houses, and none of the

social life for which the club-houses have afforded opportunity.

Wesleyan had scarcely entered upon the intercollegiate activities, athletic, intellectual, and religious, which have been so important a feature in the recent life of American colleges. The Agallian Baseball Club, of which Dr. Olin was one of the heroes, played, I believe, one intercollegiate game in my Senior year. So far as I know, that was the beginning of intercollegiate athletics at Wesleyan.

Surely the Wesleyan of 1865 was very different from the greater Wesleyan which we all love to-day. We old men may at least be pardoned if we believe that some tendencies in modern college life are bad, and that others, which are good within limits, have been carried too far. But we all believe to-day that the present Wesleyan is on the whole a more wholesome place for intellectual and moral development than the Wesleyan of 1865. We rejoice in the conviction that, at the end of the fifty years, the college is not only larger and greater, but better.

I may be pardoned, if, before closing, I say a few words more specifically in regard to myself. I am grateful for fifty years of almost uninterrupted health. My classes have learned not to expect many cuts from me on account of sickness. As I approach the limit of three-score years and ten, I find my health not sensibly impaired. I am still able to take walks moderately long. I have no immediate intention of availing myself of the opportunity to retire on a Carnegie pension. Yet I cannot but feel a certain sadness in the very obvious truth that my work is well-nigh done. There can be for me little of an earthly future. I belong substantially to the past.

I have done in college a considerable variety of work. The chair to which I was called two years after my graduation was more properly a settee. My department was supposed to include the whole range of Biology and Geology, from Physiology to Meteorology, from Crystallography to Paleontology. But in those early days we all had to teach subjects outside of our own departments. For longer or shorter times I have taught Mathematics, Chemistry, Evidences of Christianity, Psychology, Economics, History, and Constitutional Law. That some of this teaching was very bad, is a truth so obvious that it need not be asserted. Besides my various attempts at teaching, I have served one year as Librarian, twenty-one years as Secretary of the Faculty, and the greater part of two years as acting President. I will say nothing in regard to the number of the committees on which I have served. I have tried to find some time for scientific investigation, and I have tried to do something for the church and for society outside of my college work. I have done too many different kinds of work to permit any of it to be done well. The variety of work which I have attempted has been partly in obedience to what seemed to be the demand of the college and of some other important interests. Perhaps that scattering of work has been still more the result of my own personal characteristics. I have sometimes almost envied men who could do some one thing *very well*, and were therefore allowed to do only that thing. I have never been able to do anything very much better than I could do something else, and have, therefore, been doing something else all my life. I have sometimes thought that, when I require an epitaph, a suitable one to sum up the character of my intellectual achievements would be, "Here lies a man who might have done something if he had not done something else."

But I am thankful for the privilege of fifty years of al-

most uninterrupted work, and I am thankful that that work has been done in Wesleyan University. I came to Wesleyan with a sincere conviction that it was the place in which I could be most useful. In my early manhood I came to feel that, if I could say anything worth saying to the men of my generation, it would be in the line of the relations between science and religion. I felt that a professorship in Wesleyan University was the position in which I could, most effectively, utter that message. In this company of brothers, children of one beloved mother, I may speak plainly what is deepest in my heart. I came to Wesleyan, as I sincerely believed, in obedience to a divine call. As the years have passed the conviction of my early manhood has only grown stronger. I am painfully conscious of some of the limitations of my work. I have had occasion to be ashamed of many blunders and to repent of many sins. But I rejoice to-day in the assurance that I have been in the right place. I believe that I have accomplished more in Wesleyan University than I could have accomplished in any other position on earth. The work itself has been its sufficient reward; but I feel a gratitude which I cannot express for the hope and trust, which the kind words of friends, old and young, have strengthened, that in some degree I have helped the college to develop into that larger and more varied life which the age demands, still cherishing the best traditions and the holiest ideals of its earlier days; and that I have helped to inspire some who have been in my classes and some who have read my printed words, with a sterner loyalty to truth, and a deeper reverence for that great, mysterious universe which, in every atom and in every motion, is radiant with the glory of immanent Deity.

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